



## MEETING MINUTES / 21 APRIL 2020

**\*\*MEETING WAS CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM DUE TO COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS\*\***

### **ATTENDANCE:**

Present: Showell, Stewart, Baldwin, Farley, Lardizzone, Lopez, Magner, McMullen, Sarg, Seppala  
**83.3%**

Excused: Bradley, Newman

Unexcused:

Guests: Courtney Stewart (Deputy Secretary of State), Vince Kane (Wilmington VAMC), Ginny Yelland (Wilmington VAMC), Tina Foskey (Delaware Veterans Home), Pat Cerchio (First State Women Warriors)

### **CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS:**

Moment of silence for:

Service Members abroad

Martin Luther King Jr

Wished Chairwoman Showell good health as she's "under the weather"

### **MEETING MINUTES:**

October minutes were motioned by McMullen approved by Magner

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS:**

#### **Wilmington VAMC – Vince Kane, Director**

Due to COVID-19, no visitors are authorized in the facilities

Patient care has shifted to telehealth

Testing is being done outside the emergency room

- Results are read in 45 minutes

38 veteran cases are being treated

- One veteran, who was on a ventilator, passed away

Continuing to monitor individuals who are positive

Added beds to meet the potential outcomes from the pandemic

- The beds remain empty

Precautionary actions have minimized infections

Veterans with infections are being managed at home

Staff with infections are also being monitored

- Goal is to ensure they are healthy and then safe to return to work

Discussing with the governor and state on what a start-up would look like

- Not at a point where a start-up will begin soon

- Virus spread is still occurring and have not met criteria to consider routine operations

- Decrease in new cases must be met

Once things start back up, it will be different then how it used to be

- Virtual platforms, scheduling differently, waiting areas, masking veterans, facility entry

Has changed the way to deliver healthcare and will review lessons learned

(Sarg) How is your supply of personal protective equipment?

Worked closely with hospital systems and VA to maintain supply

- Prepared to receive additional supplies
- Appreciate donations

**Delaware Veterans Home (DVH) – Tina Foskey, Director:**

76 Residents

Closed to admissions and visitors since early March

Started and continue to screen employees

- Looking for sore throat, cough, fever

No residents with COVID-19

Following state, federal, and CMS regulations

Renovations have been put on hold

Good with personal protective equipment

Staff is doing an excellent job taking care of the residents and maintaining hygiene

**Home of the Brave, Director Jessica Finan:**

Two beds available at male facility / six beds at female facility

Everyone is wearing masks and adhering to hygiene standards

Screening everyone for symptoms

Engaging residents with mental health webinars

Four staff are working from home and eight are at the facility

- This allows for social distancing

Masks are needed

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Pat Cerchio, First State Women Warriors

The Women's Tea was rescheduled to 11 July

Anna Lopez, Commissioner

Still seeking stand down donations, will forward information on where to send

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Bear Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Magner:**

Interments – 70 (-10)

**Millsboro Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Bradley:**

Interments – 30 (+8)

**Health and Human Services, Commissioner Sarg:**

Dover AFB has limited access to retirees

- Clinic is not providing medical care
  - Pharmacy prescriptions are filled for pick up on Wednesday and Saturday
  - Masks are required in the commissary and they are performing a 100% identification check
- Food Bank distributions are 22 (Dover Downs), and 24 (Sussex Central High School) April
- Veterans home dental suite project is awaiting plan approval

**Legislative Affairs, Commissioner McMullen:**

(Sarg) Legislation will depend on post-COVID 19 actions and state budget

General Assembly sent a letter to the U.S. Delegation requesting the use of \$1.25B in federal aid to the state's revenue fund for state services

- The aid package currently has too many usage restrictions

Our recommendations will be based on funding

(McMullen) The commission's 8 April veterans committee presentation was cancelled and asked the staffer to forward copies of the recommendations to the committee members

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:**

DVTF Previous Month: Applications 13; Granted 9 (69.2%); Awarded \$9,408.46; Balance - \$15,670.00

Secretary of State is discussing with the Governor the possible cancellation of our Memorial Day services

**ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS:**

Commissioner McMullen (Air Force Sergeants Association - AFSA)

Chapter meetings have been cancelled until further notice

- Members have voluntarily stocked the commissary shelves

21 – 23 April: The Division 1 Professional Airman Conference, Dayton, OH was cancelled

- A teleconference will be held with chapter leadership

In February spoke to Representative Yearick and Representative Bonini about our legislative recommendations

Vacant (American Legion - AL)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Bradley (American Veterans - AmVets)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Lardizzone (Disabled American Veterans - DAV)

Have not held meetings and meetings are cancelled until September

Departmental conference has been cancelled until next year

Submitted claims for two widows

National Convention, Dallas, TX, is still scheduled for July

Vacant (Korean War Veterans)

Nothing to report

Commissioner Farley (Marine Corps League - MCL)

Working on holding a departmental meeting via Zoom

Toys for Tots is attempting to establish a toy distribution during the crisis

- Information via the Toys for Tots Foundation website

Commissioner Sarg (Military Officers Association of America - MOAA)

Was scheduled to storm the hill (Capitol Hill) the third week in March but it was cancelled

- Emailing delegates on MOAA recommendations and issues

Chapters have not been meeting

Still working on JROTC scholarships and how to present them to the recipients

Commissioner Magner (Military Order of the Purple Heart - MOPH)

18 April state convention was cancelled

National commander stated the department elections are not yet official

- Because elections were not held in person

JROTC scholarship program is on hold and working presentation methods with different schools

- Trying to use student's home addresses for mailing

ROTC awards for the Air Force were given to the University of Delaware administrator  
Still seeking a contact for the ROTC awards for the Army  
27 – 29 July: National Convention, Charlestown, WV

Commissioner Newman (Veterans of Foreign Wars - VFW)  
Nothing to report

Commissioner Baldwin (Vietnam Veterans of America – VVA)  
Delaware Community Foundation webinar today to discuss nonprofit, including trust fund, sponsorships  
Spoke with a veteran who is interested in representing the Korean War Veterans of America on the commission

Commissioner Showell (At Large, affiliated with Delaware National Guard)  
Attended Lt. Governor's Veterans Arts and Humanities Summit in March  
- Focused on pairing arts and humanities agencies with veterans' needs  
- Various veterans spoke of how art therapy helped them deal with issues  
Sent a note to the boards and commissions chair on our vacant/expiring positions

Commissioner Seppala (At Large, affiliated with Military Order of World Wars)  
Listened in on 16 April Wilmington VAMC webinar  
MOWW museum activities have been cancelled  
MOWW National Convention is scheduled for 5 – 8 August, Detroit, MI  
MOWW JROTC Awards Program, mailed out 18 awards and certificates to schools

Commissioner Lopez (At Large, affiliated with Delaware Veterans)  
Dover Mayors Crisis Awareness meetings have been cancelled  
Doing wellness checks on former veteran clients  
DelVets posts are closed  
Figuring how to recognize scholarship recipients

Commissioner Stewart (At Large, affiliated with student veterans' associations)  
Nothing to report

**TERM COMPLETION:**

Bradley – 21 April 2020  
Newman – 21 April 2020

**EVENTS:**

To be determined

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION:**

**CLOSED SESSION:**

**SPECIAL SESSION:**

**NEXT MEETING:**

**Tuesday, 21 April 2020 at 1000**

**LOCATION:**

**Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs**